



# NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

## NOAA Maritime Archaeologists Discover Shipwreck of British Whaling Ship *Gledstanes* that Sank off Kure Atoll in 1837

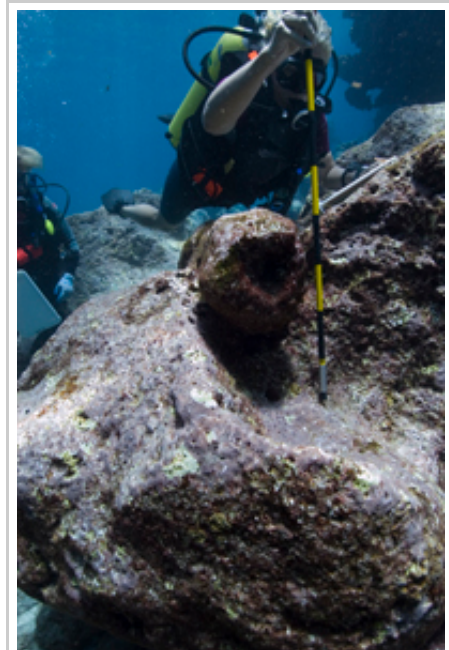
August 15, 2008

A team of maritime heritage archaeologists from [NOAA's National Marine Sanctuaries](#) have discovered the shipwreck remains of the 1837 British whaling ship *Gledstanes*. The shipwreck was found off Kure Atoll within the [Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument](#) during a month-long expedition to discover and document shipwrecks in monument waters.

At the end of the first exploratory dive of the day, the NOAA dive team discovered a pile of iron ballast and some chain. The ballast led to a trail into the dramatic topography of the reef where more artifacts were found scattered, including four massive anchors, iron ballast, cannons and cannon balls, a tripod.

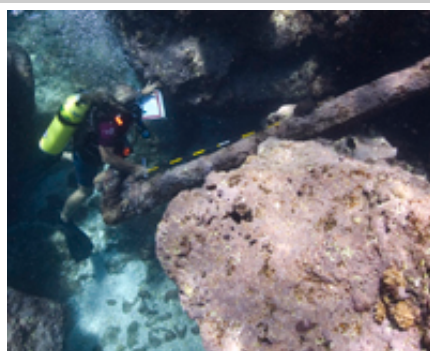
"For years I have been coming up to Kure Atoll in hopes of searching for this particular shipwreck, but in the past we have been deterred by the weather and unworkable conditions," said Kelly Gleason, NOAA archaeologist for the Monument and mission leader. "This year, the *Gledstanes* was revealed to us, and we couldn't be more thrilled with the opportunity to share this wreck site and its story with the public."

"The story of the *Gledstanes* and her survivors is limited, but adds to the important legacy of shipwreck survival stories at Kure Atoll," said Hans VanTilburg, maritime heritage coordinator for NOAA's National Marine Sanctuaries' Pacific Islands Region. After the loss of their ship due to extremely rough seas, the crew launched the ship's small boats and made for the closest dry land — the small sandy island at Kure Atoll named Ocean Island. In a short time, the *Gledstanes* broke apart in the heavy surf. The crew salvaged what they could from their destroyed ship and set about fashioning a 38-foot vessel called the *Deliverance*.



NOAA archaeologist measures the bore to a small cannon on the *Gledstanes*.

[High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)



One of the four large anchors found at the wreck of the *Gledstanes*.

[High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

The *Gledstanes* is the fourth whaling ship, and one of the oldest ships, discovered thus far in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, shedding further light on the major significance of 19th-century whaling heritage in this region.

The researchers aboard the NOAA ship *Hi'ialakai* will also make stops at French Frigate Shoals, Pearl and Hermes Atoll and Midway Atoll. The public can follow this [month-long mission](#) on the [monument's Web site](#).

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument is administered jointly by three co-trustees — the Department of Commerce, Department of the Interior and the State of Hawai'i — and represents a cooperative conservation approach to protecting the entire ecosystem. Co-trustee agencies in cooperation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs manage the monument through the Monument Management Board. The Monument

area includes the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve, Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge/Battle of Midway National Memorial, Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Kure Atoll Wildlife Sanctuary, and Northwestern Hawaiian Islands State Marine Refuge.

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